REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17-23, 25, 26 and 28 are pending and under consideration. The following remarks are respectfully submitted.

I. Rejections Under 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 13, 15-17, 19-21 and 27 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,769,671 to Lim ("Lim"). Applicants respectfully assert that the claims of the present invention are patentably distinguishable from Lim and the rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention is directed to a connector assembly that includes a first deflection portion extending outward from at least one of the first inner surface and the second inner surface along the top portion of the first deflectable clip, and a second deflection portion extending outward from the at least one of the first inner surface and the second inner surface to be positioned between the first arm and the second arm, the second deflection portion deflecting the connector clip from a first position corresponding to a first distance between the first arm and the second arm, to a second position corresponding to a second distance between the first arm and the second arm.

As described at column 3, line 45 to column 4, line 65 of Lim, Lim teaches a locking collar 24 that is force fit within a larger diameter cylindrical surface 22 of a stepped bore 6 to maintain the contact spring within the gap 16 of the connector (See FIG. 3 to illustrate separate parts of the connector, 24 and 6). In this way, the contact spring is axially locked within the connector housing 4 and coaxially located with the central axis such that inwardly extending projections 25a-25d radially located on the spring yieldably interfere with the path followed by an inserted lead. Lim describes the spring 2 as "a generally closed shape member defined by opposed free ends 31 and 33, which in the relaxed condition, define a gap . . . 29" (Emphasis added; see column 4, lines 27-33 of Lim) and that in the assembled condition of the connector and before the lead is introduced into the opening 10, the free ends of the spring maintain a spacing of approximately 0.005 inch. No where does Lim teach or suggest a deflection portion deflecting the connector clip from a first position corresponding to a first distance between the first arm and the second arm,

to a second position corresponding to a second distance between the first arm and the second arm loaded. To the contrary, Lim merely teaches positioning the spring within the bore 6 "by orientating the square shape of the spring so that the corners thereof are each located within the annular gap 16 to maintain the spring therewithin so that the spring is maintained between the opposed annular end face of the collar member 16 and the stepped surface 18 of the inner bore 6."

Lim does not teach or suggest a member formed on either the bore 6 or the cylindrical surface 24 that deflects the spring so that the gap 29 between the free ends 31 and 33 of the spring is greater than when the spring is in the relaxed condition described. The only way that the spring could be deflected in Lim would be by the insertion force of the lead, rather than by a member formed on either the bore 6 or the cylindrical surface 24, which is absent. Without any such teaching, the Examiner can only assume with hindsight that the gap 29 between the ends 31 and 33 is increased when the spring is positioned in the connector. However, assuming, *arguendo*, that Lim teaches the gap being other than the relaxed position when positioned within the connector, Lim would seem to teach the gap 29 between the ends 31 and 33 of the spring being less than when in the relaxed condition as a result of being press fit and maintained against the stepped surface 18, unless one also assumes in hindsight that there is a vacuum force available that pulls the spring arms outward toward the surface 18, which again could only be done with hindsight and therefore in error.

Lim does not teach a first deflection portion extending outward from at least one of the first inner surface and the second inner surface along the top portion of the first deflectable clip, and a second deflection portion extending outward from the at least one of the first inner surface and the second inner surface to be positioned between the first arm and the second arm, as set forth in independent claims 1 and 15 of the present invention. Therefore, claim 1 and claims 3-9, 11, 12, and 14 dependent thereon and independent claim 15 and claims 17-23, 25, 26 and 28 dependent thereon are patentably distinguishable from Lim. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

Claims 4, 8-12, 14, 18, 22-26 and 28 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lim. The Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

As described above, Lim does not teach or suggest a first deflection portion extending outward from at least one of the first inner surface and the second inner surface along the top portion of the first deflectable clip, and a second deflection portion extending outward from the at least one of the first inner surface and the second inner surface to be positioned between the first arm and the second arm, as set forth in independent claims 1 and 15 of the present invention. Therefore, claim 1 and claims 4 and 8-12 and 14 dependent thereon, independent claim 15 and claims 18, 22-26 and 28 dependent thereon are patentably distinguishable from Lim. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney to attend to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

RIES et al.

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